News release

Summer 2006 - exceptionally warm, dry and sunny

4 September 2006

Summer 2006 was one of the warmest on record for the UK, with an average temperature of 15.7 °C, 1.5 °C above the average expected at this time of year.

Paul Davies, Chief Forecaster at the Met Office said: "This summer the temperatures have been exceptionally above average, especially in July when we had record-breaking hot days."

The season was also dry, with 82% of the average rainfall, and sunny, 23% above average.

England and Wales had their second warmest summer since records began in 1914. Summer 1976 remains the warmest, with an average temperature of 16.9 °C.

July temperature records tumbled, when a maximum temperature of 36.5 °C was recorded at Wisley in Surrey on 19th.

Most of the country, except East Anglia, had below-average rainfall. East Anglia had near-average rainfall throughout most of the summer, but was exceptionally wet during August.

More about UK climate averages

Summer highlights

Temperature

- A highest-ever maximum temperature for July - 36.5 °C at the RHS gardens at Wisley in Surrey on 19th. The previous was 36.0 °C at Epsom in 1911.
- A new Welsh maximum temperature for July - 34.2 °C - was recorded at Penhow, South Wales.
- Most regions had below-average rainfall throughout summer, although some areas around the Wash had above average rainfall during August.
- Both June and July had above average sunshine over the UK as a whole. June - 32% above average and July - 52% above average. August was less sunny with 20% below average sunshine.
- The provisional Central England Temperature (CET) for this summer is the 5th warmest on record (CET records began in 1659).

Rainfall

Across the UK both June and July had below average rainfall - 43% and 27%, respectively. August rainfall was slightly below average - 9%. There were some large regional exceptions:

- Suffolk had 123.8 mm of rain during August, two-and-a-half times the monthly average. Norfolk had 147.1 mm, 171% above the monthly average
- Brize Norton, Oxfordshire, had 57.4 mm in one day on 5 July (the monthly average is 46.5 mm)
- August also saw some heavy, thundery downpours over many regions. Localised heavy rain and thunderstorms over the Surrey area, between 2pm and 10pm on 13 August 2006, gave 81 mm in six hours at Cobham.

Around Europe

- Most of Europe experienced a warmer-than-average summer with average temperatures for the season typically 1-2 °C higher than the 30-year average. Parts of northern Europe had average temperature anomalies of around 4 °C.
- In July parts of the low countries, northern Germany and Poland had average temperatures which were 5-6 °C above average.

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